

Bohn says Lappe on right path with Buffs

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

DENVER -- Winning. Generating excitement. Filling the seats.

That formula has worked wonders for the Colorado men's basketball team in Tad Boyle's two years as head coach.

CU athletic director Mike Bohn would like to see the women's team follow the same path.

"We're using the men's model, basically," Bohn said Tuesday when he met with members of the media. "We're going to use that model to try to inspire the fact that if we want to win, we've got to be hungry to win."

Bohn has been quite pleased with the job done by head coach Linda Lappe, who recently completed her second season with the Buffs. She led CU to a 21-14 record and a trip to the Women's NIT quarterfinals. A year ago, she led the Buffs to an 18-16 mark and WNIT quarterfinal trip.

"The fundamental structure of the program has improved dramatically," Bohn said. "They recognize they're on the right track and they're making wonderful progress. They also recognize the importance of continuing to enhance that."

Lappe has preached the importance of strong fundamental basketball, including rebounding, defense and limiting turnovers. She has also been the type of leader Bohn wanted when he hired her.

"Her leadership is consistent with our guiding principles around leadership: commitment, work ethic and passion for CU."

Bohn's goal for the women's basketball program, and all sports at CU, is to find another level of success. For the women's team, that means winning more games and filling more seats at the Coors Events Center.

"We've got to continue with our entertainment, obviously making the games good," Bohn said. "We need the team to play inspired, fundamentally sound basketball, which is what Linda is all about."

Whether it was CU's strong play early in the season (the Buffs started 12-0) or the excitement over being in the Pac-12, the Buffs had good attendance this past season. They averaged 2,679 fans per game, second in the Pac-12 to perennial national power Stanford (4,250).

"Our goal is to take over the No. 1 spot," Bohn said.

That's a lofty goal, but with better success on the court, Bohn believes Lappe's squad can get there.

"That's why the intensity of interest from our fan base and the environment we create on game day is vital," he said. "When it's on in the Coors Events Center, we're pretty good."

"Our fans know good basketball when they see it and they support it."

With only one senior departing and a good recruiting class coming in, fans could have a lot to cheer for next season. The Buffs are aiming for the NCAA Tournament.

"I know that's their goal, that's always our goal to get into the postseason," Bohn said. "That's the ultimate stage that we want to be on."

Bohn wouldn't say he expects the Buffs to be in the Tournament, but said the team is headed in that direction.

"No question," he said.

New Drake coach Baranczyk: It's a dream come true to coach in my hometown [with video]

The same name kept popping up during Drake's pursuit of a new women's basketball coach.

Wherever athletic director Sandy Hatfield Clubb went, well-wishers offered a specific homegrown candidate.

"I couldn't go to the grocery store," Hatfield Clubb recalled. "I couldn't go to a board meeting, without being tapped on the shoulder and being asked, 'Have you been looking at Jennie Lillis?' "

The answer was, yes. And on Tuesday, Jennie (Lillis) Baranczyk took over a Bulldogs team that was lacking a local buzz.

"This is an absolute dream to come back to my hometown," Baranczyk said during an introductory press conference, "and to coach at a program that I watched growing up go to NCAA Tournaments and win Missouri Valley Conference championships."

It will be a memorable spring for the

former West Des Moines Dowling Catholic star. Baranczyk and her husband, Scott, are expecting their first child in two weeks — while she settles into her role with the Drake family.

"Today was the first day we kind of actually got to talk to her on a one-on-one basis," point guard Kyndal Clark said. "We got to meet her during the interview process. So it was fun getting to know her then, and getting to see her where she was more relaxed, starting to put her guard down more."

Baranczyk was recruited by the Bulldogs coming out of high school, but she followed former Drake coach Lisa Bluder to Iowa.

The 6-foot-1 forward started 121-of-122 career for the Hawkeyes, finishing with 1,762 points, 827 rebounds and 114 blocks.

After graduating in 2004, Baranczyk went on to become an assistant coach at Kansas State, Marquette and Colorado.

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"Jennie is someone who has always been highly driven," Bluder said Tuesday. "She's been at three very high-level programs, working for really good coaches. ... She is somebody who is definitely ready for this task. She's done her homework."

Hatfield Clubb began the search after Amy Stephens resigned March 26. The school received more than 40 applications and another dozen candidates were considered.

"We want a winner," Hatfield Clubb said. "We want somebody who has demonstrated success, a tenacious recruiter in Iowa and the Midwest, great with Xs and Os and has demonstrated a competitive fire."

Baranczyk talked about playing a creative, up-tempo style, with an emphasis on rebounding.

"We are going to carry ourselves in a championship manner," she said, "by walking tall and valuing every little thing we need to do to be the best we can possibly be."

The Bulldogs finished 18-16 last season, advancing to the title game of the Valley tournament. Stephens posted a record of 151-130 in nine years at Drake. Bluder went 187-106 from 1991-2000, winning more than 20 games in five of her last six seasons.

The landscape of women's sports has changed since then, with bigger schools willing and able to devote more resources.

"I think there is more of a division between BCS schools and non-BCS schools," Bluder said, "than there was at that time."

Hatfield Clubb acknowledged the challenges, saying she sought a coach who could "dream big dreams and exceed expectations, doing more with less."

Enthusiasm has been dampened by the fact that last season's Drake roster did not feature any players from Iowa high schools.

"We need to recruit the state of Iowa," Hatfield Clubb said. "And so, a connection to the state was quickly how (Baranczyk) became part of the list."



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Jennie (Lillis) Baranczyk, former Dowling and Iowa star, named Drake coach

One of the most accomplished women's basketball players in central Iowa history is coming home.

Jennie (Lillis) Baranczyk — a former star for West Des Moines Dowling Catholic and the Iowa Hawkeyes — will be introduced Tuesday at 4 p.m. as the new Drake women's basketball coach.

"We're really excited," Joyce Lillis, Jennie's mother, said late Monday. "It's not a surprise. She's very driven and she has a great background.

"I think she'll do an outstanding job."

Drake athletic director Sandy Hatfield Clubb confirmed the hiring in a press release issued through the athletic department.

"I am thrilled to confirm that we have hired Jennie Lillis Baranczyk to be our new women's basketball head coach," Hatfield Clubb said. "She is an outstanding coach and is the perfect fit to lead our women's basketball program.

"It is exciting to welcome Jennie back to

Des Moines."

Baranczyk's parents remember their daughter honing her skills as a grade-schooler at the Walnut Creek YMCA. She blossomed into a versatile 6-foot-1 forward for the Hawkeyes, then launched her coaching career after graduating in 2004.

"She has been training for this a long time," Baranczyk's father, Terry Lillis, said.

Baranczyk was a first-team, all-state selection by the Des Moines Sunday Register as a junior and senior at Dowling — and received honorable-mention all-America honors from USA Today in 1999.

The Maroons won state titles in 1998 and 2000, posting a 100-5 record during her four-year prep career.

She started 30 of 31 games her freshman season at Iowa, averaging 10.7 points and 7.6 rebounds.

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Baranczyk was eventually a three-time captain for the Hawkeyes and three-time academic all-Big Ten selection, starting 121 of 122 career games.

She finished with 1,762 points, 827 rebounds and 114 blocks.

Baranczyk became an assistant coach at Marquette in 2006, where she helped with the development of post players. She spent the past two seasons as a member of coach Linda Lappe's staff at Colorado.

"Jennie is one of the best young coaches in the nation and she is a huge asset in terms of recruiting and overall knowledge of the game," Lappe said in a statement on the Buffaloes' website. "She is a very good teacher, a proven winner and has high character."

Baranczyk, 29, and her husband, Scott, married in May of 2009.

She replaces former Drake coach Amy Stephens, who resigned after guiding the Bulldogs to an 18-16 record and a second-place finish in the Missouri Valley Conference tournament. Drake featured three freshman starters.



Jennie Lillis was an all-Big Ten performer at Iowa.



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DES MOINES, Iowa - Former University of Iowa standout and Des Moines native, **Jennie Lillis Baranczyk** has been named the sixth head women's basketball coach at Drake University, Director of Athletics **Sandy Hatfield Clubb** announced Tuesday afternoon.

"I am honored and thrilled to become the head women's basketball coach at Drake University," said Lillis Baranczyk. "As a native of Des Moines, I remember very clearly the winning tradition of Drake women's basketball. This is truly a great fit for me, my family and for Drake. I am excited to be able to recruit and work with student-athletes who will share in the same goals and vision. I am very proud to represent the Drake Bulldogs and we will work hard to be a significant part of this community."



Lillis Baranczyk, 30, comes to Drake after a two-year stint as assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at the University of Colorado, where she was on the staff of head coach Linda Lappe, a former Drake assistant coach. Prior to Colorado, Lillis Baranczyk was an assistant coach for four seasons at Marquette after two seasons as an assistant coach at Kansas State.

"Jennie Lillis Baranczyk is an extraordinary fit for the Drake Women's Basketball program," Hatfield Clubb said. "She is a demonstrated teacher of the game, a tenacious recruiter of Iowa and the Midwest and she is committed to the holistic development of the student-athlete. Jennie has been mentored by four talented head coaches, including former Drake head coach Lisa Bluder, and is uniquely prepared to lead Drake women's basketball program. I am thrilled she has joined the Bulldog family."

"I am absolutely delighted that Jennie will be Drake's next women's basketball coach," said Drake President **David Maxw**. "We have a wonderful program with a proud tradition of winning with exceptional young women who excel as much in the classroom as they do on the court, and we have high aspirations for the team's future. Jennie has just the right combination of experience, values, leadership, basketball smarts and passion for the game to make those aspirations a reality."

Lillis Baranczyk helped recruit and develop numerous all-conference student-athletes at all three schools and she was instrumental in Colorado securing the No. 27th-ranked 2012 recruiting class by *ESPN HoopGurlz*. At Colorado, she coached All-Big 12 first-team forward Brittney Spears and All-Pac-12 guard Chucky Jeffrey as well as Pac-12 all-freshman team members Lexy Kresl and Jen Reese. On the floor she has had a coaching emphasis in the development of the post player at all three schools.

"Jennie was an important part of our first two years at Colorado, and her loyalty, commitment and hard work have helped point us in the right direction," Lappe said. "We are definitely disappointed to be losing a great coach, and an even better person, but we couldn't be happier for her and her family and know that she will be a great fit at Drake University. We wish Jennie the best of luck as she heads back to her home city."

Lillis Baranczyk has reached postseason tournament play every season as a player and coach. She has coached in two NCAA tournaments and has won two WNIT championships as a coach (Kansas State in 2006 and Marquette in 2008). At Iowa, she played in three NCAA tournaments and one WNIT and helped Iowa win the 2001 Big Ten Tournament.

A three-time captain at Iowa, Lillis Baranczyk (formerly Jennie Lillis), was a four-year letterwinner at forward from 2000-04 under Bluder. One of the best all-around players in Hawkeye basketball history, she was a three-time All-Big Ten Conference selection, earning first-team honors as a junior in 2003 and second-team honors as a sophomore in 2002 and as a senior in 2004.

She graduated as the only player in Iowa history in the top 10 of five major statistical categories: points, rebounds, assists, steals and blocks and is one of only two Hawkeye players to score more than 1,700 points and grab 800 rebounds.

"Jennie is a great fit for Drake," said Bluder. "She is a Des Moines native who knows the importance and value of women's basketball in this state, having lived it. She will do a wonderful job as a leader of the program. Jennie is a hard worker who knows the game well and has values that match the Drake philosophy. She will bring the same competitiveness that made a great player, and invigorate the Drake players and community with her passion for the game and desire to be successful. I am proud to see Jennie take over the program and I know it is in good hands."

Lillis Baranczyk graduated from Iowa in 2004 with her bachelor's degree in Communication Studies and from Kansas State with her master's degree in Counseling and Student Development in 2007. At Iowa, she was the recipient of the 2004 Big Ten Conference's Medal of Honor. First awarded in 1914, the Big Ten's oldest award is given annually to a student in the graduating class of each university that demonstrated proficiency in scholarship and athletics. Lillis Baranczyk was also a three-time Academic All-Big Ten pick, a WBCA Scholarship Award recipient, CoSIDA Academic All-District honoree, and Collegiate Basketball Award for Excellence semifinalist as a senior in 2004.

In her prep career, she helped Dowling Catholic in Des Moines win state championships in 1998 and 2000 and she is a member of the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union Hall of Fame.

"This is a tremendous opportunity to coach this team to continue to build upon the winning tradition the Bulldogs have established in the Missouri Valley Conference," Lillis Baranczyk said. "I will strive to sign student-athletes who will love Drake University and will make the alumni and the Des Moines community proud. I want to thank Sandy Hatfield Clubb, David Maxwell and the rest of the Drake administration for sharing their vision clearly and giving me the opportunity to lead this program into the future."

Jennie and her husband Scott Baranczyk were married in May 2009 and the couple is expecting their first child soon.